

1/ listening at a first device to a communication channel having within each frame transmission period a quiet time slot designated therein, the communication channel communicatively coupling the two or more current components of the computer network, the first device not initially admitted to the computer network, but capable of joining the computer network upon acceptance of a connection request transmitted within one of the designated quiet time slots from the first device to at least one of the network's current components;

determining at the first device, the existence of the designated quiet time slots within each of the frame transmission periods of the communication channel;

waiting for one of the designated quiet time slots; and

transmitting the connection request from the first device to a controller of the computer network within the one of the designated quiet time slots.

2/ 2. (Thrice Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein receiving confirmation at the first device further comprises the controller transmitting the connection request to the first device to the first device periodically until a response from the first device is received by the controller.

7. (Thrice Amended) A method of seeking admission to a computer network having two or more current components, the method comprising:

3/ determining at a first device not initially admitted to the computer network, but capable of joining the computer network, whether a communication channel communicatively coupling the two or more current

components of the computer network is actively being utilized by the current components of the computer network;

23 listening at the first device to the communication channel, the communication channel having within each frame transmission period a quiet time slot designated therein, and the communication channel communicatively coupling the two or more current components of the computer network, the first device not initially admitted to the computer network, but capable of joining the computer network upon acceptance of a connection request transmitted within one of the designated quiet time slots from the first device to at least one of the network's current components;

determining at the first device, the existence of the designated quiet time slots within each of the frame transmission periods of the communication channel;

waiting for one of the designated quiet time slots; and

transmitting the connection request from the first device to a controller of the computer network within the one of the designated quiet time slots within which the connection request is to be made, at a time depending upon whether the communication channel is actively being utilized or not.

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12. (Twice Amended) A method of seeking admission to a computer network having two or more current components, at least one component being a network controller, the method comprising:

24 listening at the network controller for a connection request packet transmitted within a designated quiet time slot in a communication channel, each frame transmission period of the communication channel including one of the designated quiet time slots, the connection request transmitted by a first device not initially admitted to the computer network, but capable of joining the

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computer network, the connection request seeking access for the first device to the communication channel communicatively coupling the network's two or more current components; and

negotiating bandwidth requirements within the communication channel with the first device upon receipt of the connection request message.

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27. (Twice Amended) A method of providing access to a computer network, comprising:

organizing communications within a computer network communication channel into a number of time slots within each frame transmission period of the communication channel, each time slot being designated for transmissions from one of a number of network components; and

including a designated quiet time slot within each frame transmission period of the communication channel for use by a first device seeking access to the communication channel, the first device not initially admitted to the network, but capable of joining the computer network.

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